DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 303 830 CS 211 691

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TITLE Speaking-Writing Courses--A Survey of Writing Program Administrators.
PUB DATE Mar 89
NOTE 18p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (40th, Seattle, WA, March 16-18, 1989).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrators; Communication Skills; Course Content; Higher Education; National Surveys; Program Content; School Surveys; Speech Communication; *Writing Instruction; Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS *Speaking Writing Relationship

ABSTRACT

A survey investigated the type and frequency of integrated speaking-writing courses or programs at college-level institutions. The purpose of the survey was to gain a sense of the extent to which courses integrate speaking and writing (where speech is valued not merely as a convenience for conducting classroom business, but as a medium for cultivating the cognitive, social, and aesthetic qualities that engender good writing); to gather sample syllabi and course materials; and to identify some of the obstacles which program administrators perceive in developing such curricula. Surveys were mailed to 498 college-level writing program administrators; the response rate was 44%. Forty percent of respondents indicated that their institutions offered courses in which at least 10% of instructional time was devoted to speaking and writing activities integrated in a deliberate, theory-based manner. Another 45% reported no such courses. The most frequent type of speaking-writing activity reported was "group discussion for invention or revision," followed by "oral presentations that also involve a writing assignment." Other common responses included peer tutorials, interviews, and reading essays aloud. (Three figures are included, and appendixes contain a brief sampling of speaking-writing courses.) (SR)

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1989 CCCC, Seattle Washington

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Speaking-Writing Courses--
A Survey of Writing Program Administrators

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In 1969, the entire January issue of College English was devoted to a 53-page article by Robert Zoellner entitled "Talk-Write: A Behavioral Pedagogy for Composition." Zoellner's article-- which Richard Larsen, former editor of College Composition and Communication, has called "probably the most important article to appear in College English in the past 20 years"-- stands today as a landmark in our field because it was among the first to pry loose the product-based "think-write" metaphor and supplant it with a process-based "talk-write" theory. Though in retrospect Zoellner's article seems too steeped in behaviorism, we know today that its significance does not hinge so much upon behaviorism as on its student-centered view of language and the creative process. The fact that Zoellner's theory focused on talk as a key element in articulating this perspective gives us today-- on the 20th anniversary of its publication-- an opportunity to examine the role that talk occupies in current college writing curricula.

Our panel is concerned with various ramifications of the role of talking and writing. For my part, I would like to

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focus specifically on the findings of a recent national survey of college-level writing program administrators who were asked about the type and frequency of integrated speaking-writing courses or programs at their institutions. The purpose of the survey was to gain some sense of the extent to which courses integrate speaking and writing, to gather sample syllabi and course materials, and to identify some of the obstacles which program administrators perceive in developing such curricula.

The survey was undertaken by Donald Rubin, who is on our panel today, and myself primarily out of curiosity about the extent to which speaking-writing curricula exist in undergraduate writing programs. Evidence and intuitions about the number of such programs were conflicting. We knew that integrated language arts has become a strong movement in grades K through 12: In NCTE's 1986 Recommended English Language Arts Curriculum Guides, K-12 sixty percent of the recommended guides involve speaking and writing, and forty percent explicitly mention integrated speaking and writing. At the college level, however, there was, on the one hand, the sense that deliberate, theory-based integration of speaking and writing is rare. Departmental divisions between speech and English have for many decades kept the two areas separate. And most current writing textbooks, a rough gauge of prevailing practices, pay little attention to speaking-writing relationships. On the other hand, the past two

decades have produced a steady stream of research literature and conference discussions on the vital role of oral language in composition--

--sometimes emphasizing theoretical issues (Bruffee, 1984; Dyson, 1988; Kroll, 1981; Moffett, 1968; Olson, 1984; Tannen, 1982; Zoellner, 1969)

--and sometimes emphasizing teaching (Elbow, 1973; Macrorie, 1979; Rubin & Dodd, 1987; Tough, 1973).

Moreover, at teachers' meetings, workshops, and conferences, as well as in literature reviews of ERIC and teaching-oriented journals, a surprising number of instructors regularly claim to engage their classes in speech activities, and to do so with full awareness of the important links between speech and writing. Entire freshman programs at Illinois and Iowa have at one time, at least, gained distinction for combining speech and writing. In other words, despite all the talk about talking-and-writing, we wondered-- who's really doing it? And just as important, who's aware that they're doing it?

Surveys were mailed to 498 writing program administrators, based on the complete membership list of the Association of Writing Program Administrators. The response rate was 44%.

[OVERHEAD #1] In part one of the survey, 40% of the respondents indicated that their institutions offered courses in which at least 10% of instructional time was devoted to

speaking and writing activities integrated in a deliberate, theory-based manner. Another 45% reported no such courses, and the remainder indicated insufficient knowledge to answer the question. [OVERHEAD #2] When asked about the kinds of speaking-writing activities students engaged in, Group discussion for invention or revision was the most frequent response, followed by Oral presentations that also involve a writing assignment. Other common responses included Peer tutorials, Interviews, and Reading essays aloud. The least common responses included Role-playing leading to writing, Lectures which compare/contrast speaking and writing, and Other.

These results indicate that integrated speaking-writing curricula at the college level are not rare, and that they involve a range of communication activities. The results for this portion of the survey are interesting because there appear to be a number of courses or programs that value speech not merely as a convenience for conducting classroom business, but a medium for cultivating the cognitive, social, and even aesthetic qualities that engender good writing. The survey gives some sense of the extent to which writing theory and research about oral language has made its way into composition courses:

--the notion of inner speech as integral to the thinking required for writing (Britton, 1967; Vygotsky, 1978),

--the role of peer response groups for writing (Bruffee,

1978; Elbow, 1973; Macrorie, 1977, 1980; Moffett, 1968),

--the enhancement of perspective-taking and audience awareness in small group discussions (Kroll & Vann, 1981; Rubin & Dodd, 1987; Spear, 1988),

--and so on.

What do some of the speaking-writing courses on today's campuses look like? Our survey also asked program administrators to send sample syllabi and course materials. We received a variety of materials on courses ranging from engineering to English to economics, peer tutoring to psychology, and businees to nursing.

One of the largest programs-- involving about 38 sections and 850 students per semester, exists at the University of Illinois in Urbana, where freshmen can opt to fulfill the composition requirement by taking a two-semester speaking and writing course through the Department of Speech Communication. Using a standard syllabus, the course provides numerous links between speech and writing assignments, such as group research projects, written responses to speeches, and speeches and essays on the same topic.

Most speaking-writing integration we learned of, though, involves single-section courses with one instructor.

One example comes from Prof. John Fugate in the English department of J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College in Richmond. The course is designed for prospective police

officers. According to the syllabus, the course applies principles of observation, oral work, and writing reports aimed at helping police officers communicate clearly. In one activity, students are given information on a crime of theft and asked, first, to write an offense report, and second, to testify orally in moot court on their written report. Related activities listed on the syllabus include instruction in taking oral statements, creative listening, using notes, role-playing, and dealing with tension.

[HANDOUT]

COMMENTS ABOUT HANDOUT--

Page 1 1st & 2nd

Two courses at the Univ. of Pennsylvania, one for engineering students and the other for nursing students. Both courses teach speaking and writing, according to the instructors' syllabi, not merely for mechanical mastery, but to emphasize (1) the broad, human context involved in communication about technology, and (2) the process by which people use language to disover ideas and communicate these ideas to others.

3rd

A freshman composition course at the Univ. of Louisville, which draws together reading, writing, and speaking around thematic units aimed at helping students gain a sense of the academic community. The course is part of the Composition

Program at Louisville directed by Joseph Comprone, who will speak in a few minutes.

Page 2 Next-to-last

A literature course taught by Toby Fulwiler at Vermont that uses dialogue journals and literature discussion groups.

Last

A freshman seminar at Mount St. Mary's College in which one activity asks students to write a self-analysis of the speeches they give.

Page 3 Top

A course in Peer Tutoring taught by Sheryl Fontaine at Claremont McKenna College, where students are taught how to use speaking and writing in helping other students to write. Note that this course appropriately involves lecture/discussion on comparisons between oral and written language.

Bottom

A course in Industrial Psychology at Alma College.

Page 4 Top

Specially targeted economics courses.

Last

A highly integrated speaking-writing course for freshman at Michigan Tech.

[OVERHEAD #3] Another part of the survey asked respondents to check "any obstacles you have met or would expect to meet with regard to developing speaking-writing instruction on your campus." Their responses are listed on the overhead, along with frequencies.

[DON'T READ-- SKIP TO *]

(1) Too much other material to cover-- not enough time. (93)

(2) Resistance of instructors to implementing such a course. (82)

(3) Problems of "turf"-- i.e., speaking is supposed to be taught in speech courses, not in writing courses. (82)

(4) No clear sense of how to design such a course. (64)

(5) Student anxieties about speaking. (54)

(6) Skepticism about the value of integrating speaking -writing instruction. (52)

(7) No obstacles. (42)

(8) No textbook to use in such a course. (33)

(9) Other. (11)

[*]

The obstacles relating to time, turf, and instructor resistance are the three most frequently cited. Though open to various interpretations, these responses, along with #4 (No clear sense of how to design such a course), reflect concerns that program administrators are in a unique position to address.

Let me conclude by offering some important points to ponder related to these obstacles.

1. If learning to write depends at least in part on learning about oral language, then what is the relationship between the speech communication curriculum and the English composition curriculum? At the University of Minnesota, the Robinett Committee wrote in 1982 that "writing and speaking professors must coordinate their instruction with disciplinary departments and share their special knowledge of language skills with faculty interested in incorporating speaking and writing into their classrooms." We know that today's introductory speech courses typically rest on theories of communication often different from those in composition curricula. Is there a lawn anywhere in these two pieces of turf?

(Continued)

2. Instructors often resist change when they feel unprepared to do what they are being asked. Trained in literature or writing, many English instructors may well lack the preparation to integrate speaking and writing. Or does the level of speaking instruction we want fall within the common sense of most English instructors?

3. Finally, the freshman composition course is often expected to provide leadership in integrating speaking, writing, reading, listening-- as well as a host of other college survival skills. Are speaking-writing advocates in danger of being perceived as yet another special interest group? Or is speaking-writing especially important for the broad goals of freshman English?

Answers to these questions are important if speaking-and-writing is to become a successful component of the freshman curriculum. In the meantime, it is encouraging to note that speaking-and-writing has occupied our professional interest for a long time, and that more teachers than we may realize are making it happen in their classrooms every day.

Integrated Speaking-Writing	Respondents
YES	40%
NO	45%
DON'T KNOW	15%

Kinds of Speaking-Writing Activities	Number of Responses
Group discussion for invention or revision	88
Oral presentations that also involve a writing assignment	76
Peer tutorials	59
Interviews	54
Reading essays aloud	53
Role-playing leading to writing	32
Lectures which compare/contrast speaking and writing	26
Other	18

Obstacles to Developing Speaking-Writing Instruction

Obstacles	Number of Responses
Too much other material to cover--not enough time	93
Resistance of instructors to implementing such a course	82
Problems of "turf"--i.e., speaking is supposed to be taught in speech courses, not in writing courses	82
No clear sense of how to design such a course	64
Student anxieties about speaking	54
Skepticism about the value of integrating speaking-writing instruction	52
No obstacles	42
No textbook to use in such a course	33
Other	11

Rafoth, 1989 CCC

A BRIEF SAMPLING OF SPEAKING-WRITING COURSES

- Course: Communications and [Engineering] Technology: Problem-Solving in a Human Context
  Institution: University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.
  Instructor: Prof. Peshe Kuriloff
  Program: Writing Across the University
  Texts: Conceptual Blockbusting (James Adams), Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing (Linda Flower), Revising Prose (Richard Lanham), Soul of a New Machine (Tracy Kidder), Double Helix (James Watson), Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance (Robert Pirsig), Brooklyn Bridge: Fact and Symbol (Alan Trachtenberg)
  Activities: Informal writing and speaking activities; conferences; discussion of readings; responses to classmates' writing and speaking; collaboration; portfolios.

- Course: Advanced Communication Seminar [in Nursing]: Problem-Solving in a Human Context
  Institution: University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.
  Instructor: Prof. Andrea Hollingsworth and Prof. Peshe Kuriloff
  Program: Writing Across the University; Nursing
  Texts: Conceptual Blockbusting (James Adams), Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing (Linda Flower), Revising Prose (Richard Lanham), Home Before Morning (Linda Van Devanter), Illness as Metaphor (Susan Sontag), Chronicle of My Mother (Y. Inoue)
  Activities: Informal writing and speaking activities; conferences; discussion of readings; responses to classmates' writing and speaking; collaboration; portfolios.

- Course: English 102
  Institution: University of Louisville
  Instructor: Prof. Joseph J. Comprone
  Program: Composition
  Texts: (Dietrich & Kaiser; also, special readings packet)
  Activities: Oral summarizing, critiquing, and reporting that contribute to later writing assignments; critical listening; collaborative workshops.

(Continued)

- Course: Communications for the Justice System
  Institution: J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, Richmond, Va.
  Instructor: Prof. John Fugate
  Program: Freshman Composition
  Texts: Writing Police Reports: A Practical Guide (Alec Ross & David Plant)
  Activities: Lecture/discussion; student-directed discussion; report writing and evaluation; films; oral work; role playing.

- Course: Basic Writing and Reading II
  Institution: Ohio State University, Columbus, Oh.
  Instructor: Prof. S. Duffey
  Program: Writing Workshop
  Texts: A Separate Peace, Passages, Coming of Age in Samoa
  Activities: Peer tutoring; group discussion for invention and revision; reading aloud; oral presentations based on students' written work; teacher-student conferences

- Courses: All Freshman Composition courses; Speaking Across the Curriculum
  Institution: Bentley College, Waltham, Ma.
  Instructor: Prof. Bruce Herzberg
  Program: The Communication Program
  Texts: (not listed)
  Activities/Goals: Critical reading; summary; synthesis; individual and group speaking; collaboration; standard written English; research; documentation.

- Course: American Literature Since 1865
  Institution: University of Vermont
  Instructor: Prof. Toby Fulwiler
  Program: English
  Texts: Twain, Hemingway, Wright, Didion, Walker, Carruth
  Activities: Dialogue journals; critical/analytical essays and personal response essays; literature discussion groups.

- Course: Freshman Seminar
  Institution: Mount St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, Md.
  Instructor: Prof. Carmen B. Schmersahl
  Program: Freshman Seminar; Writing and Communication
  Texts: (not listed)
  Activities: Prewriting for interviews; interviews; individual speeches; speech self-analysis (written); library research.

- Course: The Composing Process and Peer Tutoring
  Institution: Claremont McKenna College
  Instructor: Prof. Sheryl Fontaine
  Program: Writing Center
  Text: Writing Without Teachers (Peter Elbow)
  Activities: Lectures which compare/contrast speaking and writing; peer tutoring; group discussion for invention and revision; reading essays aloud; interviews; oral presentations.

- Course: Technical and Report Writing
  Institution: Northern Michigan University, Marquette, Mi.
  Instructor: Prof. Peter Goodrich
  Program: Freshman English
  Texts: Revising Prose (Richard Lanham), The Random House Guide to Technical and Scientific Communication (Zimmerman & Clark)
  Activities: Two 5-minute individual oral presentations; letters; resumes; case studies; research report accompanied by an oral briefing.

- A BRIEF SAMPLING OF OTHER COURSES THAT HAVE COME TO OUR ATTENTION BY WAY OF ERIC AND JOURNAL ARTICLES

  Course: English 118: Communication for Juniors and Seniors
  Institution: Drake University
  Instructor: Prof. Mildred R. Steele
  Program: English
  Texts: (none listed)
  Activities: Freewriting for self-disclosure; empathic listening and response; structured writing; small-group problem-solving; group oral presentations and simulations.

- Course: Industrial Psychology
  Institution: Alma College, Alma, Mi.
  Instructor: Prof. Henry E. Klugh
  Program: Psychology
  Texts: (none listed)
  Activities: Written abstracts of journal articles followed by informal, then formal oral presentations in concurrent classroom sessions.

(Continued)

- Courses: Specially-targeted economics courses
  Institution: DePauw University
  Instructors: Profs. W.J. Field, D.R. Wachter, and A.V. Cantanese
  Program: Economics
  Texts: (none listed)
  Activities: Written and oral brainstorming; identifying main ideas and purpose in oral messages; verbal and non-verbal delivery in oral presentations.

- Course: Dorm English (Freshman English taught in dorms)
  Institution: Michigan Technological University
  Instructors: Profs. Richard M. Goldstein and Charles W. Nelson
  Program: Humanities
  Texts: (none listed)
  Activities: Extemporaneous narration: oral analysis of papers; research reports presented to the instructor in written form and to the class orally and visually; lecture and discussion on relationships between oral and written language.